

Veterans—a Potential Source of Labor Supply for the Fishing Industry

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MY STATEMENT to you this morning is confined to a brief presentation of basic facts relative to "the premium manpower of the Nation—the American Veteran" and the agencies within the Manpower Administration whose programs are designed to aid our veterans in their quest for employment. Chapter 41 of Title 38, U. S. Code makes the following provisions:

"The Congress declares as its intent and purpose that there shall be an effective job counseling of employment placement service for veterans of any war, or of service after January 31, 1955, and that, to this end, policies shall be promulgated and administered, so as to provide for them the maximum of job opportunity in the field of gainful employment.

"The Secretary of Labor shall assign to each of the States a veterans' employment representative, who shall be a veteran of any war or of service after January 31, 1955, who at the time of appointment shall have been a bona fide resident of the State for at least two years, and who shall be appointed in accordance with the civil-service laws, and whose compensation shall be fixed in accordance with the Classification Act of 1949. Each such veterans' employment representative shall be attached to the staff of the public employment service in the State to which he has been assigned. He shall be administratively responsible to the Secretary of Labor, for the execution of the Secretary's veterans' placement policies through the public employment service in the States. In cooperation with the public employment service staff in the State, he shall—

(1) be functionally responsible for the supervision of the registration of veterans of any war or of service after January 31, 1955, in local employment offices for suitable types of employment and for placement of veterans of any war or of service after January 31, 1955, in employment;

(2) assist in securing and maintaining current information as to the various types of available employment in public works and private industry or business;

(3) promote the interests of employers in employing veterans of any war or of service after January 31, 1955;

(4) maintain regular contact with employers and veterans' organizations with a view of keeping employers advised of veterans of any war or of service after January 31, 1955, available for employment and veterans of any war or of service after January 31, 1955, advised of opportunities for employment and

(5) assist in every possible way in improving working conditions and the advancement of employment of veterans of any war or of service after January 31, 1955.

"Where deemed necessary by the Secretary of Labor, there shall be

assigned by the administrative head of the employment service in the State one or more employees, preferably veterans of any war or of service after January 31, 1955, of the staffs of local employment service offices, whose services shall be primarily devoted to discharging the duties prescribed for the veterans' employment representative."

Here within the law itself we have the framework of the Veterans Employment Service, which is part of the U. S. Employment Service. The Federal—state employment system is made up of the 52 State Employment Security Agencies affiliated with the U. S. Employment Service. This system comprises a nationwide network of more than 2,100 local offices administered by state agencies under Federal leadership with funds provided by Federal grants. Each local office operates as the manpower service center of the community and is concerned with finding jobs for workers seeking employment; recruiting workers to fill employers' job openings; providing specialized services to job applicants who encounter serious difficulties in the competitive job market; providing job market information to all users of such information and co-operating with other government agencies and local groups to resolve the manpower problems of the area.

Major emphasis is placed on providing specialized services to applicants who encounter serious difficulties in the job market. This group comprises the disadvantaged; the long-term unemployed and underemployed; the young and the old; those who are inhibited by lack of education, experience or skill or opportunity. It includes those who may be discriminated against because of color or race, and those who are hampered by any of a variety of mental, physical or other handicaps.

The services provided include reaching out to make contact with those who do not on their own initiative seek employment service assistance; intensive and personalized counseling and testing to determine interests, aptitude and needs; referral to educational and occupational training programs and other supportive services; individualized job development efforts; referrals to jobs and subsequent follow-up to aid in their adjustment to the world of work.

Special attention is given to the employment problems of veterans as well as to those who are not accepted either as volunteers for military service or by the Selective Service System.

To provide workers and employers with a basis for making sound employment decisions and to facilitate other basic operations, local offices collect and interpret information regarding current and anticipated employment and turnover data. They prepare estimates of future occupational demand and supply, emphasizing the effects of automation, technological change, and other industrial innovations. Job opportunity information is secured to more effectively match men and jobs, and area employment and unemployment information is prepared for use in planning, developing and carrying out action programs and for area economic analysis.

Local offices also provide other services to employers, such as job analysis, aptitude and proficiency testing and assistance in establishing in-plant training. They cooperate with community organizations seeking to expand employment opportunities through the formulation and execution of plans to develop an area's economy, and maintain formal arrangements for the exchange of services and employment information with the vocational schools, vocational rehabilitation, antipoverty and other agencies.

Nationwide accomplishments in the field of veterans services of the Federal—

state system coordinated by the Veterans Employment Service would be of interest to you. In 1968, such accomplishments included the placement of 1,163,500 veterans in nonagricultural jobs, 116,100 placements of disabled veterans in nonagricultural jobs and the processing of 1,830,100 veteran's applications for employment through local offices. A total of 566,400 returning veterans were contacted as part of the "personal employment assistance" program.

The number of veterans continues to increase rapidly. As of June 30, 1968, there were 25,026,000 veterans in civilian life. In addition, almost all of the increasing numbers of servicemen and servicewomen who are discharged each year become eligible for veterans status as soon as they are separated from active duty. According to the Department of Defense, 820,000 service personnel returned to civilian life in 1968. The Department of Defense now estimates that there will be 950,000 separations in 1969. This represents a substantial increase over previous estimates. The Department of Defense has not made an official estimate for separations during 1970, but preliminary estimates are that some 900,000 service personnel will return to civilian life that year.

Currently, particular attention is being given to employment counseling and job placement assistance for service personnel returning to civilian life. A major increase in employer contacts on behalf of individual veterans is planned.

At the present time, about 50% of the individuals separated from military duty choose to continue their education under the "GI Bill." Employment service counselors often are instrumental in persuading veterans who seek "stop gap" jobs to go to school under the "GI Bill" instead. For the 50% who seek immediate employment, the public employment service plans to increase the number and quality of counseling interviews. Employment service counselors and interviewers will continue to be stationed at selected United States Veterans Assistance Centers located in the largest cities, where particular attention is given to returning veterans who have not completed high school.

Another category requiring specialized employment services is the older worker. The Korean War veterans with an average age of 39 years and the World War II veterans with an average age of 49 years are in, or approaching, the older worker category. In addition, each year, 60,000 career military men with an average age of 45 years retire from service. Re-entering the labor market as older workers, many of these workers need orientation to employment possibilities under their new status. Also, employer contact is needed to promote consideration of older workers and to inform the employer of the applicability of military experience to civilian jobs.

The handicapped veteran must receive the major emphasis. Over 150,000 servicemen who were wounded in Vietnam, whose lengthy rehabilitation was completed in a military or Veterans Administration hospital, will seek jobs. Thoughtful, intensive counseling and individual job placement efforts are planned. There also will be an augmentation of job market information services for all veterans, to include specific occupational information and information about important fields of work which are in short supply of workers, such as the following: teaching, health services, recreation and manpower services.

Time available and the scope of this paper simply will not allow for a detailed breakdown of characteristics and abilities of veteran applicants currently on file in our local offices. The record of training projects and placement of veterans in jobs in the fishing industries is very sketchy. In fact, with the

exception of isolated requests in the New England area, here in Florida, and in Hawaii, our regional offices have not been made aware of a serious shortage of personnel to man commercial fishing boats. Records of the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training list five contracts entered into with fishing associations under provisions of the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) and on-the-job training programs. These five contracts involved 305 trainees in commercial fishermen and shrimp boat crewmen occupations. These projects were carried on in Massachusetts, Florida and Hawaii with a grant of \$153,529 from MDTA funds.

Now to the real crux of the problem—how do you go about locating interested applicants for crew duty on your boats? You know better than anyone else where the sources for your past successful recruiting efforts have been. Have you listed job orders with the local offices of the state employment offices in those communities? Have you an organized brochure of information as to opportunities in the field for prospective employees—abilities needed, wages, working conditions, opportunities for advancement—a general information type of statement setting forth the possibilities for a satisfactory and challenging career?

May I suggest that the essentials of your labor needs be made known to the local office and state agency officials in the area involved. I am certain that constructive efforts will be made to aid you—bringing into the picture the entire network of the Federal—state employment service operation.

Most assuredly there are young men being discharged from the armed forces who would be interested in pursuing a career aboard fishing vessels. Recently discharges from small craft duty in the Navy and Coast Guard, machine and engine repairmen, and above all those who are returning to communities in whose general economic background the fishing industry has played a leading role should be excellent potential material for recruitment. Remember in every local office of over 2,100 there is on duty a local veterans employment representative whose primary responsibility is to aid the veteran applicant upon his visit to the office. In each state, there is a veterans employment representative who spends all his time aiding the state agency staff in these efforts. Local posts and chapters of veteran organizations are excellent sources for dissemination of job information and referral of applicants. Necessity for and desirability of training projects sponsored by associations or companies under MDTA should be explored. In short and final summary—assemble the facts and information regarding your recruiting needs and discuss them with the appropriate state agency officials and veterans employment representatives—our manpower teams can assist you.